

	<p><b>ROCHESTER PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS MEETING OF TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2014</b></p> <p>The regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was held on Tuesday, January 7, 2014 at 4:30 p.m. at the Quarry Hill Nature Center. Board President Rod Toomey called the meeting to order.</p>
<b>BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	Rod Toomey, Nora Dooley, Michael Quinn, John Sipple, Dr. Scanlon, Larry Mortensen, and Vern Yetzer
<b>STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	Michael Nigbur, Dale McCamish, Leif Erickson, Ed Staiert, Jeff Morton, and Kelly Evans
<b>OPEN COMMENT PERIOD</b>	No one wished to be heard.
<b>VISITORS/DELEGATIONS</b>	Linda Hillenbrand, Human Resources Director; Melissa Schmid, Rochester Downtown Alliance; Pam Meyer, Quarry Hill Nature Center; Dawn Littleton, Friends of Indian Heights Park representative
<b>MEDIA PRESENT</b>	None present.
<b>BILLS</b>	<p>Bills for the month were presented.</p> <p>Mr. Sipple pointed out that most of the business units are below or just slightly above projections. He understands there is no control over weather but he looks forward to having positions filled to allow staff to operate more efficiently. Mr. Sipple thanked the current staff for taking the time needed to continue operations while being short staffed.</p> <p>Mr. Mortensen commented that he observed the same scenario. He asked where the money goes if it does not get spent out of each business unit. Michael Nigbur answered that there are separate categories but the funding goes into Park Reserves in some fashion. Michael reiterated that the money does not go away but rather goes into Park Reserves. Mr. Mortensen verified that the money does not get put into the City's General Fund. Michael answered that this is correct. Ms. Dooley stated that any efficiencies are kept. Michael answered that they go into reserves.</p> <p>Dale McCamish pointed out that the figures are not year-end figures. He explained that in a month, the final report will come in with expenses but little revenue. Mr. Sipple noted that there is some tweaking of those numbers beyond our control as well. Michael said this is correct.</p> <p>A motion was made by Mr. Quinn, seconded by Ms. Dooley to approve the bills. Motion carried.</p>
<b><u>CONSENT ITEMS</u></b>	<p>A motion was made by Mr. Mortensen, seconded by Mr. Quinn to approve the following consent agenda items.</p> <p>A. Approval of minutes of December 3, 2013, Park Board meeting.</p>

	<p>B. Approval of the proposed 2014 limited appointment wage schedule.</p> <p>Motion carried.</p>
<p><b><u>INFORMATIONAL ITEMS</u></b> <b>OVERVIEW OF THE RDA AND PEACE PLAZA ACTIVITIES</b></p>	<p>Michael reviewed that the Department works well with the Rochester Downtown Alliance (RDA) and RDA does great things for the City. He invited RDA to come and make a presentation to the Park Board.</p> <p>Melissa Schmid, Events Director, RDA, appeared before the Park Board. She thanked the Park Board for having her, stating what a pleasure it was to meet and address the Park Board on behalf of RDA.</p> <p>Downtown Rochester - The Place to BE. Ms. Schmid explained that this is their logo and some people do not know who RDA is. They did that intentionally to get people to embrace the downtown community as the core of the Rochester community and be empowered to accept it as our community and to build the downtown together. She reviewed the topics she will present as follows: Looking Back, Looking at 2010-2013, Looking Forward, Rochester Downtown Master Plan, and questions and answers.</p> <p>Ms. Schmid took a look back at downtown Rochester. She showed pictures of downtown Rochester from 1911, 1920's, 1940's, and 1961. Ms. Schmid pointed out that in looking back, it becomes apparent that like it or not, change happens. Change happens with you or without you. Change can be negative, uncontrollable, unpredictable, and divisive. Change has momentum.</p> <p>Ms. Schmid took a look back at the start of RDA. RDA was formed in February, 2005, as a public/private partnership after a year-long study by the Downtown Planning Task Force. RDA is funded by a portion of property taxes paid by commercial property owners located in the downtown service district. The downtown service district is comprised of 44 blocks. Ms. Schmid explained that the property owners in the district have the opportunity to go before the City Council every five years and vote for RDA's existence. This will come up again in 2014. Ms. Schmid continued that RDA started with one full time staff and now has four full time staff. They currently have a vacancy in their Executive Director position and will be searching to fill that position.</p>

Ms. Schmid referred to the Peace Plaza and the changes that have taken place and the increased events that occur at the Peace Plaza.

Ms. Schmid reported that RDA has worked on marketing, way-finding, Avenue of the Arts, development, policy, finance, and special events.

Ms. Schmid showed the Downtown Rochester - The Place to BE logo. She explained they have a new website that was revamped last May and is very user friendly. Information on the website includes RDA events as well as other downtown events resulting in a robust events calendar.

Ms. Schmid referred to RDA's strategic vision which is to create a sense of community through experiences, advocate for a positive experience, and promote the downtown identity.

Ms. Schmid reviewed the SocialICE event. She showed pictures of past events and announced the dates of February 6-8 for 2014. Ms. Schmid reported that 200 people attended in 2009 and over 40,000 attended SocialICE in 2013.

Ms. Schmid reviewed Thursdays on First and 3<sup>rd</sup>. This arts and culture festival brings in over 25,000 to 35,000 people every Thursday. Each week presents a new opportunity for people to experience arts and culture in all of its grander as well as to connect and engage. She showed pictures of past events.

Ms. Schmid reviewed color downtown Rochester and showed pictures of murals on downtown walls, art in windows, and transformer art.

Ms. Schmid thanked the Park Board and staff for their support and partnership. She reported that the partnership has grown, gained momentum, and has really made a difference. Ms. Schmid called out Michael for his leadership and Steve Freeman for all of his efforts with the Peace Plaza. She said the partnership between the Department and RDA allows them to take a space and make it a place for people to gather and have positive, meaningful quality of life experiences and she hopes to see that continue into the future. Ms. Schmid said there is a lot of change on the horizon for the downtown and she hopes to continue to build the partnership and collaborative efforts that exist with the Department.

Michael commented that RDA has several different boards; he sits on the policy board. He said RDA could do things solely to their benefit but they do not. Instead, they look and talk to us about our needs and coordinate the activities with the common goal of successful and sustainable programs for the community. Michael stated that RDA is in partnership with us.

Ms. Schmid took a look around (2010-2013) as follows: renewal of RDA in December 2009 by property owners (83%); stable budget, small reserves; committed board plus talented staff; passionate, vocal constituents; health and education base; and strong partnerships.

Ms. Schmid took a look around (2010-2013) as follows: positive momentum, more citizens coming downtown, new businesses interested, more vibrant "urban experience," MUCH to do downtown, 318 Commons, and Metropolitan Market Place.

Ms. Schmid showed pictures of 318 Commons, the Metropolitan Market Place, and downtown Rochester today.

Ms. Schmid took a look forward at collaborative partnerships (Park and Recreation, sponsors, arts and cultural organizations, DMC, and RCVB); a new leadership search; and the December, 2014 renewal of RDA.

Ms. Schmid stated that in looking forward, like it or not, change happens. Change happens with you or without you. Change can be positive, controlled, predictable, and collaborative. Change has momentum.

Mr. Toomey asked how far the special service district encompasses for the businesses that contribute to RDA. Ms. Schmid explained that the district encompasses 44 blocks. She explained where the boundaries are and noted they have stayed the same since RDA's creation in 2005.

Mr. Sipple inquired on the guidelines of the special service district. Ms. Schmid said her understanding is that the tax does not increase per individual property owner if more properties are added. The only increases have been for inflationary purposes. She said the current rate is \$0.90 per square foot annually with RDA's total budget being \$520,000 per year. Ms. Schmid explained that with new initiatives, they have done some sponsorship prospecting but their main goal is not to fundraise but rather provide programming.

	<p>Mr. Mortensen inquired on a link with Rochesterfest. Ms. Schmid answered that they have not combined resources.</p> <p>Mr. Toomey, on behalf of the Park Board, thanked Ms. Schmid for the overview.</p>
QUARRY HILL NATURE CENTER UPDATE	<p>Michael reviewed another partner in the Quarry Hill Nature Center (QHNC). Michael sits on the Friends of Quarry Hill Board and has worked together with Pam Meyer on things happening at Quarry Hill the last three years. Mr. Toomey pointed out that Ms. Dooley is on the Friends Board representing the Park Board. Ms. Dooley explained that she was on the Friends Board prior to her Park Board appointment and that Michael is the Department liaison.</p> <p>Pam Meyer, Executive Director, Friends of Quarry Hill (the non-profit organization that operates out of the building), appeared before the Park Board. Ms. Meyer stated what a pleasure it is to talk to the Park Board. QHNC represents a unique partnership between the City of Rochester, Friends of Quarry Hill, and Rochester School District. Ms. Meyer noted that the School District is where they got their start.</p> <p>Ms. Meyer provided the history of the property in that the City purchased the land from the State to create Quarry Hill Park. Around the same time, there was a committee of science teachers from the School District that were brought together and charged with developing an environmental education curriculum. Ms. Meyer continued that these teachers wanted a place to take the students for the courses. At the time, Quarry Hill represented the ideal place. Ms. Meyer explained that teachers taught science in Quarry Hill Park during the summer and so it began. Ms. Meyer continued that eventually a building was built to teach classes and hold programs and it became mandatory that every student in Rochester had to have classes in the building. Neither the City nor the School District had the money to build a facility, thus a nonprofit was formed to raise money to build the facility.</p> <p>Ms. Meyer stated that it has always been about the experience, to make it real, to let students put their hands on it. An experience can be a very powerful thing. Ms. Meyer said it was and still is about engaging and planting the seed of appreciation. People protect what they love. Ms. Meyer stated that the park is their laboratory; it was true in the beginning and is still true today. The park is used for all of their classes. Ms. Meyer said kids love being outdoors, they are excited about learning. The park is also their playground</p>

and has phenomenal resources for recreation. Ms. Meyer said the park is rich in resources.

Ms. Meyer reported that QHNC has nine full-time employees and two part-time employees that are here year round. In the summer, they hire 15 additional staff members to teach summer programs. Ms. Meyer continued they have many volunteers and would not be able to do the work they do without these volunteers. She reported that in 2012, 504 volunteers give almost 5,000 hours of service. Ms. Meyer explained that a number of the volunteers are high school students that started out taking classes and come back to volunteer or for summer jobs. QHNC has meaning for them. Ms. Meyer noted that service organizations give of their time to QHNC as well.

Ms. Meyer referred to their animal ambassadors. They have 100 live animals representing 36 species.

Ms. Meyer referred to Exploration Hall and reviewed that it is open on weekends at no admission. There are naturalists on staff to interact with visitors.

Ms. Meyer referred to the many programs offered at QHNC throughout the year to include science curriculum classes, preschool programs, birthday parties, family programs, full moon hikes, adult programs, programs for adults with disabilities, outreach to senior communities, hosting Zumbro Valley Audubon programs, and learn to ski and snowshoe instructions.

Ms. Meyer reviewed that every Sunday they offer programs at QHNC and include programs such as Bird Banding, Cave Tour and Historic Hike, and Critter Sunday.

Ms. Meyer reviewed that when they first started, the building was not open to the public. They are now very open to the public which is one of their strengths as well as the volume of programming offered to the community.

Ms. Meyer stated that in the summer, it is all about summer camps. QHNC does the largest summer nature day camp in the upper Midwest. Ms. Meyer reported that in the 9 weeks, they host over 2,300 students ranging in age from 4 years old up to high school.

Ms. Meyer reviewed events throughout the year to include Fall Festival (largest event with funds raised going directly to support operations), Creatures of the Night, and

Winterfest (Ground Hog's Day Celebration, Festival of Birds, and Ski by Candlelight).

Ms. Meyer reviewed that special exhibits are offered to the community. The first exhibit was offered in 2006, Stan the T-Rex, and 20,000 visitors came out to see the exhibit. Coming this March of 2014, Hatching the Past Dinosaur Eggs & Babies, exhibit will be offered. She stated that Think Bank has been a tremendous supporter of QHNC and sponsor of the exhibits.

Ms. Meyer said that Mayo Clinic has also been a tremendous sponsor which has allowed them to offer free field trips including transportation to QHNC for every 5<sup>th</sup> grader in Olmsted County. They also sponsor free admission tickets through the schools.

Ms. Meyer said QHNC is in a really good place and is really excited about the future and what that will mean to the community. They will be looking at how they can continue to offer what they do to our growing community and what opportunity is out there for them. Ms. Meyer reported that the Friends of Quarry Hill have invested over \$1 million to QHNC.

Mr. Sipple inquired on the possible addition in the near future. Ms. Meyer referred to the safe room grant that Jeff Morton has been working hard on securing. The safe room would be a sheltering place for students but also provide additional programming space. QHNC has limited space and resources and needs to look at how to grow that. Ms. Meyer reported that they are looking at the safe room, programming space, and investing in the public interpretation spaces.

Mr. Yetzer inquired about programs with Oxbow or Whitewater. Ms. Meyer answered that they have done some joint partnerships with Oxbow to share resources but there is not a collaborative program.

Michael showed where the safe room would be located and explained that exterior space (pavilion) for programming is being looked at as well. Mr. Sipple said a shelter would be well utilized. Ms. Meyer explained that they have a basement but it is not the best for sheltering purposes. Jeff announced that the safe room project was included with the State's package that was sent to FEMA which is a positive sign. He does not know how long FEMA will take to review.

	<p>Ms. Dooley inquired on how many children visit QHNC per year. Ms. Meyer reported that they see 100,000 children in an exhibit year with 25,000 visiting on field trips. They are seeing a demand for what they offer from school districts outside of Rochester.</p> <p>Ms. Dooley asked how many naturalists are certified teachers on staff at QHNC. Ms. Meyer explained that they have three certified teachers. Four of the nine QHNC employees are part-time School District employees.</p> <p>Mr. Sipple inquired about a park expansion. Ms. Meyer referred to the field when you drive into QHNC which is DNR land. The DNR recently secured a grant to restore the field to low land, woodland forest. Ms. Meyer noted that this will offer QHNC additional program space once the area gets seeded. Michael added there was concern the DNR may sell the property for development activities. Ms. Meyer said the land will remain as DNR land but the grant requires the land to remain as natural space.</p> <p>Dr. Scanlon inquired about the new ski trails to the north. Michael explained the boundaries and that additional lands, further north, are being considered for purchase for a potential pond site.</p> <p>Ms. Meyer stated that the QHNC is a tremendous community asset and it her pleasure to work here.</p> <p>Dr. Scanlon asked if the land and facility are owned by the City. Michael answered that it is all City property and we have an agreement with the Friends of Quarry Hill. Ms. Meyer added that the land and building are City property and QHNC staff is a combination of the Friends and School District. Dr. Scanlon asked if there are four School District employees. Ms. Meyer explained there are four part-time employees of the School District. These positions were more than part-time in the past. The remaining staff are employees of the Friends of Quarry Hill. Ms. Meyer reviewed their budget, grants, and fundraising. Dr. Scanlon inquired on fundraising. Ms. Meyer explained that most fundraising is done by her via grant writing. The Friends Board assists with different campaigns.</p> <p>Mr. Toomey, on behalf of the Park Board, thanked Ms. Meyer for the update.</p>
<b>PARK BOARD DIRECTION DISCUSSION</b>	<p>Mr. Mortensen asked for feedback from the Park Board members on the direction of the Park Board. Mr. Mortensen reviewed his personal observations from his first term on</p>



the Park Board. He stated his frustration with having to follow open meeting laws as he thinks the Park Board should have more opportunity for more collaboration and dialogue. Mr. Mortensen observed in his first term that the Park Board came together once a month, approved bills, asked some questions, and approved staff recommendations. Rarely have there been discussions regarding strategy and future issues. Mr. Mortensen is asking what the role of a Board member is and asking if the Board members should be more involved in strategies and developing goals for staff. He noted that the Board has not talked about or developed a strategy for the future.

Mr. Mortensen observed that the relationship with the City Council has been less than cordial at times. He would like to see the Board work on a positive and healthy relationship with the City Council.

Mr. Mortensen observed that there are a number of independent lobbying groups and as the Park Board, he feels we should stand up and be a collective voice in support of those groups.

Mr. Mortensen observed that the Park System infrastructure is deteriorating. We are barely keeping up with maintaining that infrastructure much less being able to expand it.

Mr. Mortensen asked for dialogue from the Park Board.

Mr. Toomey asked what Mr. Mortensen thinks the role of a Park Board member should be. When Mr. Toomey first started on the Board, he was told he was the eyes and ears of the community. Mr. Mortensen agreed. Mr. Mortensen googled the role of a director of a not-for-profit organization and found strategy, governance, finance, resource development, hiring the top executive, strategic planning, policy oversight and development, fundraising, ensuring accountability, establishing objectives, protecting image, etc. Mr. Mortensen's personal thoughts are that the Park Board should provide oversight, long-term direction, and a link between community residents and the Department.

Mr. Yetzer said from his short tenure on the Board, the role has been to give the rubber stamp and be the interface between the community and the Department. He feels the Park Board should be involved in strategy aspects for the Department as a long-term strategy would help with the monthly decisions made by the Board. Mr. Yetzer said either

the Park Board or the new Director or a combination should come up with a long-term strategy for the Department.

Dr. Scanlon said the Park Board could do a better job of advocacy of the role of parks in the community. The current design of how parks are added to the City is good with the development and method used but there needs to be a mechanism for how the next major addition comes to the Park System. Dr. Scanlon said that neighborhood parks are great but he is looking at the next major addition to the Park System. Mr. Toomey mentioned Cascade Lake. Dr. Scanlon agreed but questioned if a well-defined structure exists. Dr. Scanlon said the Mayo Civic Center being split off was an unfortunate event in the history of the Board and Department.

Ms. Dooley noted the frustration with getting appointed to a board or commission and not having a clear direction or understanding of the role. She said that oversight and long-term direction are excellent things for the Park Board to provide. The mission statement was a great thing to get accomplished. Ms. Dooley feels that one of the core things the Board provides is an open, public forum for the greatly varied groups to bring forth their ideas and share what they do with the Board. She feels Ron Bastian increased transparency in the process and feels it is important to continue to increase transparency in the process. Ms. Dooley said it is as much or as little as you want to do as a Board member. Ms. Dooley added that providing vigilance and oversight matters. She is glad strategic planning is being done. Ms. Dooley thinks we provide a key and vital function and appreciates the diversity and different strengths represented on the Board.

Mr. Sipple agreed with being the eyes and ears of the community. He suggested having goals and objectives by ward for improvements to the Park System that could then be brought forward and discussed with the City Council member from that ward.

Mr. Quinn commented that Mr. Mortensen has done a great job looking at things. He agrees with Dr. Scanlon regarding the MCC. He feels we are on the edge of going over the cliff. Mr. Quinn said in the last two years, the Park Board has looked at bigger structures and found that we are so far behind the curve in maintenance that it will take a dramatic conversation with the City Council and others to address. Mr. Quinn said there are major things happening in Rochester but does not know if the funding sources will be

used for all that needs to be done to make Rochester the quality City that everyone is talking about. There are a lot of issues that need to be brought up in individual districts but there are also major items for the City of Rochester that are in need of serious improvement. Mr. Quinn said there are major issues to address with major dollars. He referred to Mayo Field and wondered how that gets brought up to date. He asked if we are putting our heads in the sand. Mr. Quinn asked if more money should be put into the golf courses as more money has been put into golf courses in other communities. Mr. Quinn stated that we have an entire City of activities that need to be upgraded and he does not know where the money is going to come from.

Mr. Toomey stated that when the Park Board has been faced with difficult decisions such as Foster-Arend and Indian Heights, they have done a good job sorting through all of the stakeholders and ultimately making a decision in a manner that everyone can live with. In looking to the future he feels the Park Board needs to be strong advocates of the infrastructure and facilities. He said there may be DMC money but there may not and we may have to push for a bonding bill. He realizes this will be difficult but he feels as a Board, we should have a position on this towards the middle to end of the year. Mr. Toomey also feels the Board needs to strive to get there in regards to strategic planning. When presented with an issue, the Board does a tremendous job sorting through the issue and making a decision.

Mr. Sipple recommended throwing ideas out for DMC money.

Mr. Toomey asked Mr. Mortensen if he is satisfied with the discussion. Mr. Mortensen answered yes and requested that as we move forward that time be set aside to have dialogue that helps the Board look to the future. Dr. Scanlon suggested the Board plan for a formal strategic planning process for the Department once the Soldiers Field master planning effort has been completed. Mr. Toomey feels this is a great idea and an idea to discuss with the new Director.

Ms. Hillenbrand suggested adding this to the list of expectations for the new Director.

Mr. Toomey, on behalf of the Park Board, thanked Mr. Mortensen for the discussion.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**DIRECTOR OF PARK AND  
RECREATION APPOINTMENT**

Mr. Toomey reviewed that the process of appointing a new Director of Park and Recreation started several months ago. Mr. Mortensen, Ms. Dooley, Ms. Hillenbrand, Mr. Kvenvold, and Mr. Toomey served on the selection committee.

Mr. Mortensen read the following synopsis of the process:

*The City of Rochester Park and Recreation Director retired in June, 2013. The Board of Park Commissioners is responsible for the selection and hiring of the Park and Recreation Department Director. The Park Board of Commissioners began a recruitment process to replace this Director in the fall of 2013. A subcommittee of the Board (Nora Dooley, Larry Mortensen, and Rod Toomey) was selected to complete this recruitment process with the assistance of the City Human Resources Department (HR).*

*On October 15<sup>th</sup>, the position was posted by HR on a variety of job posting sites. During the posting period, October 15<sup>th</sup> to November 27<sup>th</sup>, 79 applications were received. The HR staff used tools to evaluate each of the applications to determine those candidates that met the minimum requirements of the job and scored each candidate based on a series of standard questions. This initial screening identified 35 candidates who met the minimum standards of the position. In November, the selection committee and the HR staff reviewed the credentials of the 35 qualified candidates. From this review, 9 candidates were identified for further review and evaluation, 2 candidates were internal candidates, and 7 were individuals from across the country – external candidates. On December 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, telephone interviews were conducted with the external candidates. From this review, one candidate was removed from consideration; the 6 remaining external candidates and 2 internal candidates were identified for face-to-face interviews which were scheduled for the week of December 16<sup>th</sup>.*

*During the week of December 16<sup>th</sup>, face-to-face interviews were conducted with each candidate. The interview panel included the Park Board selection subcommittee, City Administrator Steven Kvenvold, and City HR Director Linda Hillenbrand. Prior to their scheduled interview, three (3) external candidates removed themselves from consideration. In addition to the face-to-face interviews, the three (3) external candidates were also given a tour of some of the major elements of the Park and Recreation system.*

*(Rod Toomey and Larry Mortensen conducted these two hour tours with each external candidate.)*

*Based on the review of all applications, identification of candidates that met the minimum requirements, telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews, additional HR follow-up including a background check and reference checks, the interview panel recommends Mr. Paul Widman as the new Park and Recreation Director for the City of Rochester, MN.*

*Mr. Toomey provided a bio of Mr. Widman as follows:*

*Paul Widman is a 25 year veteran in parks and recreation. He has served as the Assistant Director of Metro Parks in Nashville, Tennessee for the past nine years, providing leadership to community recreation facilities, arts and cultural programs, nature centers and historic sites. Paul led the Recreation Division of Metro Parks during a time of extensive expansion in facilities and programs.*

*Paul's leadership is highlighted by his efforts to extend the reach of parks and recreation services through linking arms with other agencies. He is the co-founder and co-director of the Nashville Collaborative, a unique health and wellness partnership between Metro Parks and the Division of General Pediatrics at Monroe Carrel Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. The Collaborative has received nearly \$15 million in grant funding to develop and test several community-based, family-centered wellness programs.*

*Paul received his bachelor's degree in Parks and Recreation Management at George Mason University. He is a Certified Park and Recreation Executive with the National Recreation and Park Association.*

*He shares his excitement for the move to Rochester with his wife, Cara, and four children. Paul plans to make the move to Rochester in the next several weeks; the family will join him at the end of the school year.*

*A motion was made by Mr. Mortensen, seconded by Ms. Dooley to appoint Paul Widman as the Director of the Rochester Park and Recreation Department.*

*Ms. Dooley referred to the internal candidates; she was happy to have their applications and thought they did very well. Ms. Dooley said that Mr. Widman stood out for his extensive parks experience and his unique work addressing obesity. They were fortunate to have such a candidate to*

consider for the position. Ms. Dooley added to the synopsis that the position was posted nationally.

Mr. Yetzer asked Mr. Widman's motivation for coming here from Nashville. Mr. Toomey said Mr. Widman wants to be a director and has gone as far as he can in Nashville.

Dr. Scanlon asked what his current position is. Mr. Toomey answered he is an Assistant Director, one of two. He has been very active in recreation, his collaboration with Vanderbilt in childhood obesity, arts and cultural programs, and many other areas. Mr. Toomey added that Mr. Widman is a very engaging gentleman. Ms. Dooley added that he is very well spoken, very charismatic, and showed outstanding business practices. Mr. Toomey noted it was a difficult decision but a unanimous decision and choice. Mr. Widman brings a lot to the table.

Ms. Dooley asked Ms. Hillenbrand to comment. Ms. Hillenbrand reported that Mr. Widman is accustomed to moving for advancement in his career. He has spent time in Washington, Arizona, and currently Tennessee so has moved for advancement in his career. She thinks he will be a great strategic leader for the City of Rochester. He will be phenomenal working with staff as he is very relationship oriented. Ms. Hillenbrand said Mr. Widman has done great work on the relationship side. She sees him as being a good fit for the City and Board. Ms. Dooley added that Mr. Widman is politically savvy.

Mr. Sipple thanked Ms. Hillenbrand for working with the Board. Ms. Hillenbrand said it was her privilege working with the Board.

The original motion was voted on at this time. Motion carried.

Mr. Toomey read the following statement from Mr. Widman:

*I appreciate the vote of confidence in the opportunity to lead the Parks and Recreation Department. I look forward to serving with the Board in providing quality parks, facilities, programs and services to the residents of Rochester.*

*I know that the Department is comprised of outstanding employees whose daily work contributes to the quality of life in Rochester. I am pleased to be joining this dedicated team.*

	<p><i>Providing that the Board approves my transition to the Director position, I will be working with Stevan Kvenvold and Linda Hillenbrand to establish a start date. We have tentatively discussed late January or early February.</i></p> <p><i>I am excited about the work that is ahead of us.</i></p> <p>Mr. Toomey thanked Michael, Dale, and staff. He knows a lot of hard work has been put in and appreciates what staff has gone through since the end of June. These efforts are greatly appreciated by the Board. Mr. Toomey stated that he looks forward to working with Mr. Widman and having him work with all of the staff.</p> <p>Ms. Dooley stated that it was great to work with Ms. Hillenbrand. Ms. Hillenbrand thanked the Board and stated that it was a great experience, good outcome, and a privilege to work with the Board. Mr. Toomey said it was very enjoyable working with Ms. Hillenbrand and Mr. Comstock. Ms. Dooley asked if the Board worked with Human Resources on past appointments. Mr. Toomey answered yes but this process was more precise and a much better experience. The past selection involved a larger committee and it worked well this time thanks to Ms. Hillenbrand and Human Resources staff.</p>
DIRECTOR'S REPORT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quarterly division meetings were held with discussions on budgets and projects.</li> <li>2. Winter is upon us with people using the parks playing hockey, skating, and using the trails.</li> <li>3. Michael thanked the Park Board for working with him as the Interim Director.</li> </ol>
OTHER BUSINESS	<p>Mr. Toomey brought up a letter regarding the Rochester Softball Association (RSA) taking over softball. Mr. Toomey explained it is not known if all Park Board members received the letter. Michael will get copies to all members. He mentioned the letter is from a group of softball players with concerns. Discussion will be held once all members get a copy.</p> <p>Dawn Littleton said the public should also get to see the letter. Mr. Toomey said that will happen when it gets brought back as a discussion item and all Board members have seen the letter.</p> <p>Mr. Quinn asked if a copy of the letter will be provided to Ben Boldt of RSA. Mr. Toomey plans to meet with Mr. Boldt and Michael to address the concerns. Ms. Dooley also felt RSA's Board Chair should be informed and given a copy of</p>

the letter. Mr. Toomey pointed out that Mr. Boldt sits on RSA's Board.

Ms. Dooley asked if there is a policy regarding anonymous letters. She feels very strongly that if people have concerns they should bring them forward. She does not like giving alleged credibility to comments that are anonymous and would like a legal decision on this. Mr. Toomey wants to have all the Board members see the letter before having discussion. Dr. Scanlon has reservations giving credibility to an anonymous letter and questioned the public distribution of an anonymous letter. Mr. Quinn said emails have been received that we do not necessarily know who they are from. He did not realize that not everyone had received a copy of the letter. Mr. Quinn agreed that all members of the Park Board should see and read the letter before any discussion. Ms. Dooley noted another concern of not knowing if we all got the same letter. The letter was addressed to her and it was opened. Ms. Dooley said it is not legal for the Clerk's Office to open. If the letter is distributed, then in sense we are in violation of the open meeting law. She said each Board member received a stamped, addressed envelope and we are assuming all received the same letter. Mr. Toomey said that before the letter is shared, feedback will be gotten from the City Attorney.

Ms. Littleton said bringing a letter to a public meeting makes it public. Ms. Dooley said we do not know we all received the same letter. Ms. Littleton suggested that copies be sent outside the public meeting. Mr. Toomey said he has no idea why the group only sent the letter to four Board members. Ms. Dooley said her letter was addressed to Nora Dooley with the City Hall address. Michael stated that he will address this with the City Attorney and determine if it is public or not and the next course of action.

Mr. Sipple inquired on Mayo Field. Mr. Toomey reported that a meeting was held with interesting comments. This is still an ongoing issue that will be brought back to the Board.

Mr. Sipple referred to the final design elements of the St. Marys water tower and would be happy to share those with the Board if they wish. A camera was set up to take pictures of the entire project.

Mr. Mortensen announced an assignment to each Board member regarding the new Director. He asked each member to identify expectations for the first year, three



years, and five years, share those views with Kelly Evans who will assemble them and bring back at the next meeting to share the Board's expectations. Mr. Toomey suggested shortening the timeframe to six months and nine months. Ms. Hillenbrand stated that it is hard to go beyond three years especially without a strategic plan in place. She suggested keeping it fairly generic for the first six months to one year as that is a learning environment. Mr. Toomey said to identify expectations for the new Director for six months and one year. Ms. Hillenbrand asked that the expectations be shared with her to in turn share with Mr. Kvenvold and place in Mr. Widman's personnel file.

Ms. Dooley stated that she enjoys sitting on the Board and when people challenge Board practices and she does value Mr. Mortensen looking into that. It was awesome to work with Human Resources on the new Director process and felt it went very smoothly.

Dr. Scanlon said this was a thought provoking meeting. The next few months should be very interesting.

Mr. Yetzer spent a lot of time at Graham Arena recently and people are very impressed with the lobby area and updates at Graham. He stated that we may see things deteriorating but people from the outside still see good things and are impressed with our facilities.

Mr. Toomey said we have a tremendous system but also have tremendous challenges. We are very blessed with what we have.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m. on a motion from Mr. Mortensen, seconded by Ms. Dooley.